

EXAMINER 'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Tarek N. Fahmi on 10-24-08.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claim 12 is canceled.

Claim 1, line 5, after "network", insert --- , the centralized determination being made by a designated node acting as an entry point for the flows into the multi-stage network and that sets up an end-to-end flow paths within the multi-stage network ---.

Claim 13, line 1, change "claim 12" to --- claim 15 ---.

Claim 15, line 5, after "network", insert --- , wherein next hops in the paths for the flows are locally determined at each of the nodes as packets of the flows traverse the flow paths within the multi-stage network ---.

Reason for Allowance

2. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Regarding claims 1-11, the prior art fails to teach or suggest a method, comprising determining, in a centralized fashion, paths for flows within a multi-stage network made up of processing nodes grouped into clusters having similar functionality, by encoding node selection information representing flow path decisions for all clusters of the multi-stage network in packets of each flow within the multi-stage network, the centralized determination being made by a designated node acting as an entry point for the flows into the multi-stage network and that sets up an end-to-end flow paths within the multi-stage network, as specified in the independent claim 1.

Regarding claims 13-22, the prior art fails to teach or suggest a method, comprising determining, in a distributed fashion, paths for flows within a multi-stage network made up of processing nodes grouped into clusters having similar functionality, by encoding node selection information representing flow path decisions for all clusters of the multi-stage network in packets of each flow within the multi-stage network, wherein next hops in the paths for the flows are locally determined at each of the nodes as packets of the flows traverse the flow paths within the multi-stage network, in combination with other limitations, as specified in the independent claim 13.

3. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."
4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Duc Ho whose telephone number is (571) 272-3147. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm.

If attempt to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jay Patel, can be reached on (571) 272-2988.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (571) 272-2600.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

5. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Patent Examiner

/DUC C HO/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2419

10-24-08